



# The **TRUMPET**

A publication from the Kansas Office of the State Fire Marshal | Fall 2015

**SMOKE ALARMS:**  
**Can you hear the beep where you sleep?**

Contests Promote Fire Safety ♦ Automatic Sprinklers Save Lives ♦ Dangers of Novelty Lighters ♦ Dealing with Youth Firesetters ♦ Hidden Dangers at Home ♦ What is NFIRS?

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## FROM THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

### Can you hear the beep where you sleep?

The heat of Summer is giving way to the cool air of Autumn, and many of us look forward to the beautiful Fall foliage changing colors.

While you're enjoying those seasonal changes, please don't forget to change the batteries in your smoke detectors — and, better yet, swap those old outdated smoke detectors for newer models with 10-year sealed lithium batteries! We highly recommend these models that will last much longer and will help keep your family safe.



The theme for this year's Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 4-10) is "Hear the Beep Where You Sleep! Every Bedroom Needs a Working Smoke Alarm!" In this issue of *The Trumpet*, you'll learn more about the importance of having working smoke alarms inside and outside all sleeping areas. During 2014, 64% of Kansas home fire deaths resulted from fires reported at night between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. while most people are sleeping.

As 2015 quickly rushes past us, we begin looking ahead to the future — including the next legislative cycle. I am always open to hearing ideas or suggestions from our Kansas Fire Service. If you have any ideas or proposals that could benefit our mutual efforts to create a safer Kansas, please contact me at [doug.jorgensen@ksfm.ks.gov](mailto:doug.jorgensen@ksfm.ks.gov).

Sincerely,

**Doug Jorgensen**

Kansas State Fire Marshal

### STAY CONNECTED



Cover photo courtesy of Yvonne ([Flickr: yjeva](#)).



## HOT NEWS



### Two contests underway to promote fire safety

*Annual poster contest for K-6 kids and "Visualize" graphic contest for college students*

#### K-6th Grade Fire Safety Poster Contest Promotes Smoke Alarms



In its year, our statewide fire safety poster contest aims to get the young children of our state to think about fire safety and to help teach other kids what they have learned. The contest is open to all elementary school children in Kansas. The winning entries in each category will be recognized and invited to meet the Kansas Governor and State Fire Marshal Doug Jorgensen at the capitol building in January 2016. For details, visit the [Poster Contest](#) section of our website.

#### "Visualize Fire Safety" Contest Engages Creative College Students



For the 2nd year, creative Kansas college students will use data from the Kansas Fire Incident Reporting System (KFIRS) (and new for this year, they can use data from the [2014 KFIRS Annual Report](#)) to create any kind of graphic promoting fire safety. This is your chance to go behind the scenes of Fire Safety and create your own message for the Public. Can you visualize a fireproof Kansas? [Visit the Visualize page for details.](#)

#### OUR MISSION

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is dedicated to protecting the lives and property of the people of Kansas from the hazards of fire, explosion and hazardous materials by fostering a safe environment through education, inspection, enforcement, regulation, investigation, hazardous material incident mitigation, data collection, and by acting as a liaison to the Kansas Fire Service.

All of the efforts of the Office are designed to reduce the deaths, injuries and property losses of Kansans.

### THE TRUMPET



#### EDITOR

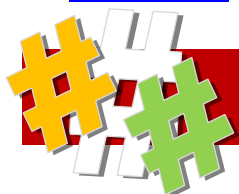
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#### SUBMISSIONS

For information on receiving the State Fire Marshal Trumpet or to submit your meeting notices, training announcements, articles, photos, or other information, please contact [Kevin Doel](#). Photos should be submitted as a .jpg or .tif attachment to an email. All materials are due by the 20th of the month prior to publication.

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## BY THE NUMBERS

In 2014, Kansas fire departments responded to **2,933** residential fires, and these fires resulted in **109** civilian injuries and **25** civilian deaths, **66** firefighter injuries and **\$58 million** in direct damage

**25%** of home fire deaths were caused by fires that started in the bedroom. Another **25%** resulted from fires in the living room, family room or den.

**3 out of 5** home fire deaths in 2007-2011 were caused by fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.





## Fire Prevention Week focuses on smoke alarms inside and outside of sleeping areas

This year's Fire Prevention Week is October 4-10. This year's theme is *"Hear the Beep Where you Sleep. Every Bedroom Needs a Working Smoke Alarm!"*, reminding residents about the importance of having working smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement.

"In a fire, seconds count," said Doug Jorgensen, State Fire Marshal. "In Kansas, nearly two-thirds of home fire deaths result from fires reported at night between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. when most people are asleep. Home smoke alarms can alert people to a fire before it spreads, giving everyone enough time to get out."

According to statistics gathered through the National Fire Incident Reporting System, 64% of Kansas home fire deaths during 2014 resulted from fires reported at night between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Meanwhile, nationally three out of five fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

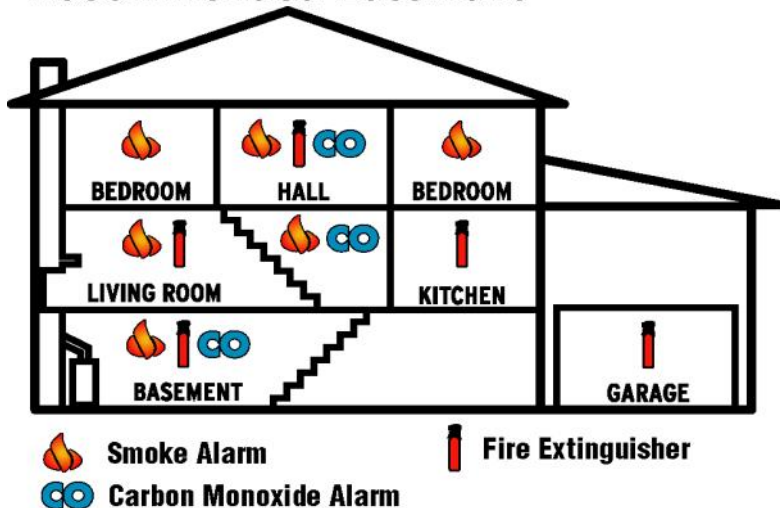
### Important safety messages

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- Interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. This way, when one sounds, they

all do.

- Test alarms at least monthly by pushing the test button.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or sooner if they don't respond properly.
- Make sure everyone in the home knows the sound of the smoke alarm and understands what to do when they hear it.
- If the smoke alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside. Go to your outside meeting

### Recommended Locations



# True Story

## Automatic Fire Sprinklers Save Lives



The Shawnee, Kansas Fire Department responded to an automatic fire alarm in September at the Shawnee Station Apartments. When the fire crew arrived, they found that the alarm had been activated by a previous kitchen fire in an apartment that the fire sprinkler system had extinguished.

“One single fire sprinkler head put out this kitchen fire, saved over \$1,000,000 in property, kept

12 families in their homes tonight, and created a single truck response from us instead of a full alarm,” said Shawnee Fire Marshal Corey Sands. “This is a textbook example of how putting preventative measures in place can help people and their property remain safe.”

There were no injuries to either civilians or firefighters from this afternoon’s fire and the damage caused is estimated at \$5,000.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, unattended cooking is the number one cause of fires in the United States and results in over 400 civilian deaths every year.

The Shawnee Fire Department would like to remind citizens that if they are cooking or preparing food, check it regularly, stay in the kitchen while food is cooking, and use a timer to help remind you that you’re cooking.

### Answers to Quiz on Page 9

- |        |        |        |         |
|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. Yes | 4. Yes | 7. Yes | 10. Yes |
| 2. No  | 5. No  | 8. Yes | 11. No  |
| 3. No  | 6. No  | 9. Yes | 12. Yes |



## Getting youth firesetters on the right track

By Mende Barnett

It is typical for kids to be interested in fire. It's bright, hot and interesting. There is a lot of mystery that surrounds fire.

Kids who are more than just curious will act on their impulses. They will either intentionally start a fire for the thrill or by accident, but this type of behavior needs special attention.

Children under the age of ten typically start fires more out of curiosity and not because of psychological problems. Fires set by younger children also cause

more monetary damage than those set by adolescents.

Some kids set fires as a means of entertainment — not intending to harm themselves or someone else but as a way to have fun.

Studies show that most juvenile firesetters often have low self-esteem, limited social problem-solving skills and often are not equipped with necessary coping skills. They are merely expressing stress, anxiety and trying to deal with their feelings.

Typically they have some underlying issues with anger.

In order to be able to provide assistance to parents, teachers and caregivers, these fires need to be reported to the fire departments. Having accurate data helps all those involved provide appropriate assistance.

If you come across a youth who has either proven that they have fire issues or have talked about it, it is highly



encouraged that you contact your local fire department.

There are resources available for kids who have more than just a “natural” attraction to fire.

### **The State of Kansas currently has two Youth Firesetter Intervention Coalitions.**

YFIT, the Johnson County Youth Firesetter Intervention Team, is comprised of local Fire Departments, mental health officials and other agencies assisting with the education and support of these youths. To contact YFIT, call Corey Sands with Shawnee Fire Department at 913-631-2999.

The Fire Burn and Safety Alliance of South Central Kansas covers the counties of Sedgwick, Butler, Kingman, Reno, Cowley, Sumner and Harvey. To contact this alliance, contact Judd Gifford at [yfiresks.com](http://yfiresks.com).

If you live out of either of these areas of coverage, you may still contact them for information and resources or visit our [website](#).

“Fires are not just a fire department problem but a community one,” says Corey Sands, Fire Marshal with the Shawnee, Kansas Fire Department. “It will take the community and fire service working together to lower incidents of fires. If a teacher notices a student that is starting fires, contact your local fire department for assistance. It is the goal of the fire service to offer intervention education to not only the child but also the family. This vital education not only

helps save the child and their family from injury but the responding firefighter as well.”

Corey has dealt first-hand with kids who have been experimenting with fires. When Corey is investigating youth firesetters, he likes to make

sure that the kids realize what the consequences of their actions can be. He feels strongly that it takes more than just the fire department to help them. It is a collaborative effort between those in the kids’ lives and the community.

Parents should talk to their kids about fire. Not all fire is bad, but when it is misused or handled incorrectly it can get out of control very quickly. Teaching our kids that fire is a natural resource and

the importance of it can be beneficial to them.

Kids also need to know more than the typical stop-drop and roll message. Having a healthy and safe atmosphere where kids are exposed to fire can let them still be curious without getting hurt. When having a bar-b-que, talk to them about using the grill. Campouts and even fireworks are good times to discuss the importance of fire safety.

Our office also has an [extensive lending library](#) with multiple Firesetter DVD’s that you are welcome to request.

Kids as young as four years old can start fires accidentally or intentionally. If you know of a child who has experimented with setting fires, it is imperative that you contact someone who can assist them and get them the help they need.



“Fires are not just a fire department problem but a community one.”



Many Novelty/toy-like lighters look like animals, miniature cars, musical instruments, game pieces and other objects that attract children. Other lighters are look-alike miniatures of adult tools or instruments. For example: cell phones, hammers, paintbrushes, and felt-tip markers. These novelty lighters are dangerous in the hands of children unable to tell the difference between a toy and a lighter.

A Novelty/Toy like lighter is a lighter that is designed to look or resemble an object other than a lighter, and may also have audio visual effects; the designs and effects make the lighter appealing or attractive to children.

*Our display case of novelty lighters is available for educational programs in Kansas. Call our office at 785-296-3401 to let us know about your upcoming event.*



# QUIZ!

## Is it a lighter or a toy?

Place a checkmark in the box beneath each object you believe to be a lighter!  
Answers are on page 5.

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# What danger hides in your home?

In October each year, we put extra emphasis on fire prevention with Fire Prevention Week in Kansas and around the country.

How about extending our prevention vigilance and actions to the storage areas around our homes targeting chemical hazards? Many of these chemicals can cause or contribute to the intensity of a fire in addition to severe health effects.

For example, look around your garage! Propane cylinders, gasoline containers, motor oil, last year's fertilizer and this year's leftover pesticides for the flowers.

The storage shed in the back yard is a harbinger of many hazards like various poisons, some very outdated.

Under the kitchen sink is a wonderful space to set all kinds of fun

stuff like carpet shampoo, oven cleaners, soaps, drain cleaners, chlorine bleach, lots of spray cans and bottles with unknown chemicals in them because we have forgotten what we used them for.

Down in the basement, you might find sawdust accumulation, lubricants, extension cords, hobby and craft materials i.e. toxic glues etc. that are hazardous if used without ventilation or mixed improperly.

How about that bathroom medicine cabinet? Check for outdated meds, ointments, and various other medicinal items that have long past expired and may have become very toxic and dangerous over time.

And, while we are at it, if you have kids around the house, do they have access to all of these items in the various storage areas

around your property? How about securing the hazardous items and or get rid of them if they are no longer viable or usable.

Remember the hazard warning words on poison containers?

**CAUTION**, meaning a low toxicity level

**WARNING**, indicating a higher toxicity level

**DANGER**, meaning the highest level of toxicity.

Always read and follow the directions on the label of toxic garden chemicals. If someone gets overcome or contaminated with these chemicals, see a doctor and seal the remainder of the product container in a clear plastic bag and take that to the doctor with you. The doctor will be able to use much information on the label to assist in treatment.



By Sara Wood, NFIRS Program Manager

It's a requirement. It's a black hole. It's paperwork. Nope, it's NFIRS, the National Fire Information Reporting System. It's a program that can change the face of the fire service, impact the safety of your population, and make sure you have the information you need. There are many names for NFIRS. Some call it by a state program name and others call it by the software program a department purchased. Some simply call it "run reports." It's all the same thing, no matter what you call it.

### **Let NFIRS be your fire department's advocate**

Need new tools? Need a new truck? How are you going to convince the Powers That Be to get that for you? You have to give them a reason. You need cold hard numbers without feelings and emotions. "Mr. Board President, we ran 50 fires at buildings with three or more stories last year where 12 people were injured. Owners had damages in excess of \$2 million and we feel we can do better at saving lives and property by adding a quint to our fleet." You can get persuasive information easily

through NFIRS. Unfortunately, many departments find data quality issues with NFIRS right when they need the numbers. Do your department a favor and pretend you need some large piece of equipment. You probably won't have to pretend very hard. Go check out your NFIRS reports and see if your data quality would support a strong argument. Does it? Identify your areas for cleanup so NFIRS can be your advocate when you need it. I'm not promising you'll get everything but you'll at least have something to back up your proposal. People like numbers, especially those behind a dollar sign, and they like to know what those numbers are buying.

You're not just advocating for your department. This is a national program. Someone somewhere is looking at NFIRS numbers and making a decision that impacts Fire Service resources. If your numbers aren't included you are not the only department that suffers.

### **Not every community has the same problem**

Public safety is a moving target. Moving from highly populated areas to rural agricultural areas change the needs of the Fire Service. Even changing the age demographics of your population will create new problems. You have to understand your area and your demands. NFIRS can help with that. By accurately reporting you also gain the ability to accurately analyze. When you can analyze a problem you can educate and prepare. Educate your communities or provide information so

someone else can present the education. You are in a position to educate because you are close to the community, usually a direct member of it. Your voice will be taken seriously. Often times the fire department is so busy handling emergencies that prevention sweeps to the back. Use your NFIRS information to target your top community safety concern and spread that information. If you don't have time, partner with local organizations that will run with what you give them. Preventing emergencies will lighten your load and help your community directly.

Did I mention NFIRS reporting can also help your ISO rating? That's right. A better ISO rating is good for you and your community. NFIRS is so important that ISO is willing to take your compliance (or non-compliance) into account.

NFIRS is the voice of the fire service and it is speaking more places than you might know: product recalls, station placement and coverage, personal protection equipment development, funding, grants, educational programs, and so many more. Every report matters and it's not being stuffed into a black hole. No department is too small to participate.







**Fire Alarm  
Systems Webinar**  
[REGISTER HERE](#)

**Free**  
PRESENTED BY: SUSAN SUMMERS, OSFM INSPECTOR

**Monday, Nov 9th  
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

- Fire Alarm Plans
- Co Detection
- Low frequency requirements
- NFPA 72 changes
- Central Station Monitoring
- Qualified personnel

**FOR  
INSPECTORS  
WHO HOLD AN  
MOU WITH OUR  
OFFICE.**

**Office of the State Fire Marshal**

# NFIRS @

## ***NEW monthly webcast on NFIRS topics!***

Participate free from the comfort of your own home!

Each webinar will begin at 7pm and will last approximately 1 hour. [Go to our NFIRS page for more details.](#)

### **UPCOMING SCHEDULE**

October 15-Stats for AFG grants: where you can find them, how to get them, and how to use them. At the end we will discuss reporting mutual aid correctly and why it's important to have the right numbers.

November 19-Reporting Structure Fires & Exposure fires: the most requested topic for training.

December 17-Ask the program manager! Ask me anything about NFIRS in this open talk.

January 21-Fire service casualties: what are they, how do you report them, and what are they used for?

# Kansas

## **Smoke Alarm Installation Program**

*"Saving the Lives of Kansans-One Home at a Time"*

**FREE!** 10-year sealed lithium battery photoelectric smoke alarms available for homes in your community!  
We just need local fire departments to install them!

[Learn more on our website!](#)

